



MORGANTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

May 12, 2016

6:30 PM

City Council Chambers

President:

Peter DeMasters, 6th Ward

Vice-President:

Carol Pyles, 7th Ward

Planning Commissioners:

Sam Loretta, 1st Ward

Tim Stranko, 2nd Ward

William Blosser, 3rd Ward

Bill Petros, 4th Ward

Mike Shuman, 5th Ward

Charles McEwuen, Admin.

Bill Kaweck, City Council

STAFF REPORT

CASE NO: TX16-02 / Administrative / Wall Sign

REQUEST:

Administratively requested Zoning Text Amendments providing for wall signs on retaining walls.

BACKGROUND and ANALYSIS:

The Planning and Zoning Code provides prescriptive standards for signage located on exterior walls of buildings and awnings attached to structures without regard to the placement of wall type signs on retaining walls.

The current standards present the following deficiencies.

1. The definition of structure specifically excludes retaining walls. The definition of structure is shown below:

STRUCTURE – Anything constructed, erected, or situated by man that requires location on the ground or being attached to something having location on the ground; but not including vehicles, recreational vehicles, campers, tents less than thirty-six square feet in area, retaining walls, fences not over eight feet in height, yard and play equipment, utility lines and underground facilities. (Ord. 12-26. Passed 7-3-12.)

2. The definition of wall signs only allows for wall signage to be placed on exterior walls. The definition of wall sign is shown below:

SIGN, WALL – Any sign painted on or attached to and extending not more than six (6) inches from an exterior wall in a parallel manner.

3. An exterior wall is defined as a wall that encloses a habitable or usable space, as shown below:

WALL, EXTERIOR – A vertical, structural component of a building which encloses habitable or usable space; a parapet extending not more than twelve inches above a flat roof shall be considered part of the exterior wall for purposes of determining signage.

4. A retaining wall does not enclose any space. A retaining wall is simply a wall built into the land, over eighteen inches in height. The definition of a “Retaining Wall” is shown below:

RETAINING WALL – A wall or terraced combination of walls used to retain more than eighteen (18) vertical inches of material.

A retaining wall can serve as the primary point of visible communication for both pedestrian and vehicle passersby given a site's topography; particularly, when the residential and/or nonresidential use(s) requiring safe and effective communication of its existence is/are not located in operative proximity to passersby.

Development Services

Christopher Fletcher, AICP
Director

Planning Division

389 Spruce Street
Morgantown, WV 26505
304.284.7431



MORGANTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

May 12, 2016

6:30 PM

City Council Chambers

President:

Peter DeMasters, 6th Ward

Vice-President:

Carol Pyles, 7th Ward

Planning Commissioners:

Sam Loretta, 1st Ward

Tim Stranko, 2nd Ward

William Blosser, 3rd Ward

Bill Petros, 4th Ward

Mike Shuman, 5th Ward

Charles McEwuen, Admin.

Bill Kawecki, City Council

Amending the definition of "Wall Sign" in Article 1329.02 to include retaining walls will allow for signage to be placed onto retaining walls. Additionally, the provision of permitting a wall sign on a retaining wall requires further clarification in Articles 1369.07 and 1369.11.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff respectfully advises the Planning Commission to forward a favorable recommendation to City Council to amend the Planning and Zoning Code as presented below (deleted matter struck-through; new matter underlined) based on the information and findings presented herein.

1329.02 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS.

SIGN, WALL – Any sign painted on or attached to and extending not more than six (6) inches from an exterior wall or retaining wall, in a parallel manner.

1369.07 CONDITIONS FOR PERMITTED SIGNS.

(I) Wall Sign, Nonresidential.

- (1) The total area of all wall signs on a building, or on the retaining wall(s) associated with the building, shall not exceed 0.6 square feet of wall sign area per linear foot of tenant building frontage in the B-5, B-2 and I-1 districts, and 0.4 feet in area in the B-1 and B-4 districts, for each linear foot of building frontage, and the fact that signs may be permitted on more than one wall of the building shall not increase this maximum. All wall signs shall be in accordance with the provisions in Section 1369.09.

1369.11 DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS.

- (A) Construction Standards. All signs shall be designed, constructed and maintained in accordance with the following standards:
- (3) Except for permitted banners, flags, temporary signs, and window signs conforming in all respects with the requirements of this Ordinance, all signs shall be constructed of permanent materials and shall be attached to the ground, a building, a retaining wall, or a another structure by direct attachment to a wall, frame or structure.

Development Services

Christopher Fletcher, AICP
Director

Planning Division

389 Spruce Street
Morgantown, WV 26505
304.284.7431